

103

HUMANITARIAN RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI

Y 4. F 76/1:H 12/11

Humanitarian Relief Efforts in Haiti...

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

FEBRUARY 9, 1994

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

1 SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
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WASHINGTON : 1994

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Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402

ISBN 0-16-044568-X

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HUMANITARIAN RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1994

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m., in the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Hon. Robert G. Torricelli (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. TORRICELLI. The subcommittee will please come to order. Nearly 2½ years after the overthrow of President Aristide, Haiti remains one of the United States' most frustrating and intractable foreign policy dilemmas.

We have attempted to bring back President Aristide's democratically elected government through economic sanctions and isolation. We have tried negotiation and conciliation. Not only has neither approach worked, but the dilemma has grown worse.

Today we find ourselves at a crossroads. After Haiti's military leaders reneged on the negotiated settlement at Governor's Island, the U.N. reimposed an oil and arms embargo on Haiti. The result has been increased suffering among the poorest segments of Haiti's already desperate population, with little movement by the Haitian military to give up the reigns of power which they continue to hold.

We cannot lose sight of the fact that the tiny nation of Haiti poses no security threat to the United States. Indeed, the primary U.S. interest in Haiti must be to help the Haitian people and to strengthen democracy there so that asylum-seeking Haitians need not risk their lives to sail to the United States.

As a result, my belief is that a widening of the embargo to include all commercial trade, as suggested by the United States, France, Canada and Venezuela is potentially a very troubling idea. This approach will not bring the military leaders to their knees, and it will only harm those we are seeking most to help in Haiti.

Indeed, if the Haitian military is to be suggested that they would yield power because of the potential suffering of the Haitian people, they wouldn't have overthrown the government at the outset. By definition, these military leaders do not care about the potential victims either of the coup or of the embargo. The policy, therefore, in my judgment is doomed to fail.

Relief workers in Haiti have reported that since the embargo was reimposed in October, transportation to most rural areas has all but ceased. As a result, the suffering of the hundreds of thousands of Haitians who depend upon foreign relief organizations has grown worse.

In fact, at one point last month CARE reported the number of daily meals they were able to provide had dropped from 620,000 to 117,000, due primarily to a lack of fuel.

Today, the level has increased to a little over 200,000, which means that 400,000 meals are not being delivered. The primary reason is the embargo on fuel delivery.

Instead of a full-scale commercial embargo on Haiti we should be instituting other sanctions that would precisely target Haiti's military leaders.

I was pleased to see that the four friends came around to the idea of freezing more of the foreign holdings of Haitian military officers and their supporters, while revoking visas and banning non-commercial flights. Each of these makes sense; they are a target at the primary offenders of Haitian democracy. They should have been enacted a long time ago. This enactment deserves support.

Now, we should go one step further. Additional military officers can and should be placed on the list, and we must do a better job circulating that list among other countries. In fact, I believe the list of 520 or so officers could be increased to over 900 members of the officer corps, giving real punishment and real sanction to those who are the real impediment to restoring democracy.

Today, we will be hearing from Mark Schneider of USAID and from representatives of the three humanitarian relief groups who have been on the ground in Haiti trying their best in difficult circumstances to give assistance in spite of the embargo.

With the four friends on the verge of asking the U.N. to consider extending the embargo again, it is imperative that we understand the potential for malnutrition, contagious disease, the impact on the most vulnerable segments of Haitian society. It is answers to those questions primarily which we seek today, as well as advice on how, indeed, we can take other measures to help restore Haitian democracy.

Mr. Smith, do you have any comments you would like to make at the outset?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by commending the outstanding work done by humanitarian relief organizations such as CARE and the Catholic Relief Services.

Day by day, hundreds of thousands in Haiti receive their sustenance from selfless relief workers who extend the hand of compassion backed by private and public relief funds. I want to thank you for your commitment to these people, to the starving and the suffering of Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, I know you agree with me that the embargo is an issue essential to this whole debate. Many Haitians, including President Aristide, have pressed for a stiffened embargo, but others argue that the embargo has "only undermined the economy and worsened the misery of the poor."

As a matter of fact, Catholic Relief Services, in their testimony today, will point out that, by all accounts, high-ranking military and police officers targeted by the international embargo are reaping enormous economic benefits from the distortions to the economy that the sanctions are causing.

At the same time, they will testify that the suffering of the poor and the middle class Haitians is significantly increasing. Sanctions and the embargo are difficult to keep on target. They are like radiation therapy which attacks the life-threatening cells, as well as the life-sustaining cells.

Mr. Chairman, the United States every day feeds an approximate 680,000 people. These Haitians would have no other meal in the day except for our contribution. Sadly, though, we are receiving news reports of malnutrition particularly among children and those with illnesses exacerbated by the economic pressures.

We also hear about cases of TB and AIDS and other diseases that are increasing, which are reason for great concern.

Hopefully, Mr. Chairman, this hearing will help us better understand the unmet need as well. We know that there are targets that have been set. Perhaps our distinguished director of AID can focus on the unmet need. Is it possible to ratchet up our contribution so that these suffering in Haiti can likewise receive additional help and how quickly we might move to do so, even if the international community is not forthcoming in that regard?

I look forward to the testimony. I thank you for scheduling this hearing, and let me say also hopefully at some future date we can have an additional hearing to discuss the private sector and some of the other concerns that you and I have discussed so we can, again, build a case for additional action by the U.S. Government.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Thank you, Mr. Smith. Mr. Menendez, do you have any comments you would like to add?

Mr. MENENDEZ. No.

Mr. TORRICELLI. We are joined by our ranking member of the full committee. Do you have any comments you would like to make?

Mr. GILMAN. Just that I want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, for conducting this hearing and for trying to bring us up to date on the problems involving humanitarian relief for the people of Haiti. We are all frustrated with trying to find an adequate solution to restoring democracy to Haiti, and we've tried a number of possibilities to date, but apparently the embargo is beginning to have an impact upon the existing Haitian Government, whatever that may be; even the military is beginning to feel some of that, and I know the business community is very much concerned about it, and of course, the people of Haiti are bearing the brunt of all of that; but I don't think it is the time for us to consider alleviating that embargo when it is beginning to have an impact; but we would welcome hearing how we can best help the people themselves while we are trying to make certain that we return the truly democratically elected administration to Haiti by way of Mr. Aristide. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Thank you very much, Mr. Gilman. Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, do you have a comment you would like to make?

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, to congratulate you for holding this hearing. International issues dealing with the political tranquility of the entire Caribbean region become domestic issues of great concern to those of us who live in South Florida, and as we struggle with the many plans that are out there and how to restore democracy to Haiti, and restore is really an odd

phrase to use because it was so short-lived in that small, impoverished island.

I look forward to the debate on the effectiveness of the embargo and what further steps the United States can take to restore a democratic government—perhaps not Aristide; it seems more and more likely that that is the direction, but perhaps to restore some semblance of democracy for the impoverished people of Haiti.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. Ballenger. Thank you very much. Mr. Schneider, welcome to the subcommittee. We are, of course, very pleased to receive your testimony. It will be entered into the record at this point without objection in its entirety. We would ask you to orally summarize it briefly, if you could, and then we will proceed with questions.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARK L. SCHNEIDER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before your committee today. It affords me a chance to explain to you and to the public the critical importance of the United States' humanitarian assistance program in Haiti, in supporting the U.S. foreign policy goals, and helping to alleviate suffering in that country.

Haiti and its people are enduring a tragedy brought on by the refusal of the military and a small band of supporters to accept full constitutional democracy. The people of Haiti spoke clearly when they elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by an overwhelming majority. At the same time, they elected a multiparty parliament. In that country's troubled history, the election of 1990 marked a moment of hope, and the international community pledged its support to that new government. Eight months later a coup led by the military toppled that regime and drove the President to exile. Human rights abuse, fear and suffering have followed.

The international community, through the OAS and later the United Nations, rejected the attempts at extra-constitutional rule. Throughout the process since, the four friends, including the United States, have sought to help the Haitian people find a pathway out of this crisis, to restore the constitutional government.

The United States recognized from the first moment of the imposition of sanctions that there was a parallel responsibility to increase our humanitarian relief programs in Haiti.

Let me discuss those programs in the context of Haitian economic and social conditions. Haiti was the poorest country in the hemisphere before 1990 and remains the poorest country in the hemisphere today. Per capita income is estimated by the World Bank as \$370 per person prior to the crisis, and it undoubtedly is lower today. At the same time, infant mortality and child mortality statistics were and are among the worst in the region.

In Haiti, we are carrying out one of the largest per capita humanitarian relief programs in the world this year totaling approximately \$60 million. Our program provides food to nearly 700,000 Haitians daily and basic health care to nearly 2 million Haitians with no other access to such services. Our feeding program delivers more than \$17 million of Public Law 480 Title II foods through

three U.S. voluntary agencies—CARE, CRS and ADRA—to needy school children, mothers and infants, and the elderly.

Starting last September, immediately following the indication that there was going to be a restoration of constitutional government with the implementation of the Governors Island Accords, we had undertaken a new \$2.1 million emergency feeding program in the Northwest. That program has continued through CARE, and we currently have authorized levels nationwide of approximately 1 million beneficiaries with approximately 500,000 beneficiaries receiving food assistance. With the assistance of other donors such as the EEC, Canada, and the World Food Program, 730,000 beneficiaries—essentially children, women and the elderly—are receiving food each day.

At the same time, the United States provided an agreement with President Aristide for Public Law 480 Title III, which brought in \$20 million worth of wheat flour, which is being sold to bakeries to produce affordable bread and other food for the commercial market on which millions of Haitians depend.

The USAID program also provides access to basic health services for an estimated 2 million Haitians, including child survival services, vaccinations, nutritional surveillance, oral rehydration targeted on some 300,000 children under 5, and AIDS and family planning services provided to another 750,000 to 1 million Haitians, both urban and rural.

In addition, in the health field there are other donors that are active, generally operating through a coordinated committee that is managed by the Pan American Health Organization. PAHO also executed some \$12 million in assistance this last year with support from various donors, including the United States.

The third element in our humanitarian program that I want to mention is a short-term jobs program which is used to provide assistance to the very poorest among the Haitian community. It is used to clean drainage canals, repair roads needed to deliver humanitarian food, clean up garbage and dispose of solid waste in the poorest areas in the country. It is implemented, again, through U.S. PVO's, including the Pan American Development Foundation, Planning Assistance, and the Cooperative Housing Foundation.

At the moment, there are approximately 5,500 individuals working each day. We expect within several months to reach 20,000, and ultimately to reach some 62,000 a day by the summer.

Obviously, Mr. Chairman, this humanitarian program is not what we had hoped to be carrying out in Haiti. We had planned with the hope that the Governors Island Accord would be implemented for a medium- and long-term development program that dealt with Haiti's basic underlying problems of development. Those programs and those plans remain in suspension, and hopefully if the political crisis can be resolved, they can immediately be put into effect. And they cover the range from agricultural reactivation to urban programs in support of employment generation, technical assistance in reforming economic policy, public administration, as well as direct support for democratic institutions, microenterprise development and support for the judiciary.

In the short term, there are three areas that I would like to highlight as issues related to our ability to carry out the humanitarian

program. The first relates to continued fuel availability during the period of the embargo; the second is the timely monitoring of social and nutritional conditions; and the third is the need for continued close cooperation with our voluntary agencies and with Haitian voluntary agencies and other donors.

With respect to the first, the need to ensure humanitarian fuel supplies, it does little good if we have the food and the medicines in the country and an inability to get them to the people who need them.

As a result, the United States consulted with President Aristide and his government and attempted to coordinate with a variety of international agencies the establishment of a rather unique humanitarian fuel program. An interagency team developed that program; it was negotiated with the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the Pan American Health Organization was selected by them to run the system.

Prime Minister Malval made a specific request to the Exceptions Committee of the U.N. Security Council, with respect to putting into effect this fuel program. It was agreed to, and despite initial concerns, the first shipment of fuel has reached Haiti and through a combined UN/OAS team, the allocations of that fuel to the various nongovernmental organizations has begun. Approximately 125 organizations have gone in and received fuel to carry the food and medical supplies to the various feeding sites and clinics around the country.

At this point, a second shipment of fuel is being procured, which would provide the fuel for these humanitarian relief agencies approximately through March, and so long as necessary into the future.

Let me add a point now with respect to the problem of nutritional monitoring. It is obviously a continuing issue of concern to all of us. USAID collects data from 38 health clinics around Haiti on a continuing basis. It is the most systematic and accurate data that is available on a regular source for any institution in Haiti. There are problems, there are lag times in terms of the information, and obviously these are 38 sites within communities in the country, and one never can be sure that every community is reached.

Nevertheless, we have had CDC teams—Centers for Disease Control—going down to help us determine whether these monitoring systems, in fact, are providing an accurate reflection of the current situation in Haiti.

At the same time, with our voluntary agencies—CARE and others—we have been carrying out short-term assessments of the nutritional situation.

And finally, because there is a concern that some specific communities may not have been reached on the regular program, we are setting up a rapid assessment team that would move around the country in response to expressions of concern and attempt to determine whether or not in some particular community there is a serious problem.

At this point, I will tell you that all of the reporting has indicated that while Haiti's nutritional situation, as we all know, was among the worst in the hemisphere to begin with, that there has

not been any sharp decline; that the levels of malnutrition are very serious, they continue to be serious, and there are some disturbing trends in terms of those levels in the various categories; but there has not been a precipitous fall-off, and I think that that is largely as a result of the humanitarian assistance programs.

Let me recognize, if I could, and applaud the efforts of our co-operating agencies, Catholic Relief Services, the Adventist Development Relief Agency and CARE. They are not only working under difficult circumstances, but at times at great personal risk, and I think we have to appreciate the efforts that they have undertaken to attempt to meet this humanitarian need.

At the same time, I should say that the AID personnel are along with them on the ground in Haiti in attempting to assure that these humanitarian needs are met.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, during this time of the embargo, as you have said, which affects everyone in the country, USAID has taken a lead role in responding to the obligation to alleviate the suffering in the most vulnerable groups. We are prepared to strengthen those efforts along with those of other donor organizations, and we have in fact recently requested two of our cooperating agencies to come to us with proposals for increasing the levels of assistance. At the same time, we have discussed with the other donor organizations the possibilities of their increasing their feeding programs.

However, as was stated earlier, the only sure answer to Haiti's crisis is the restoration of democratic government, and international commitment to democracy, development, and justice. Thank you again.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schneider appears in the appendix.]

Mr. TORRICELLI. Thank you, Mr. Schneider. At this point the committee is going to have to break for a vote. I suspect there will be two. We will come back here just as quickly as we possibly can. Excuse us.

[Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.]

Mr. DEUTSCH. Thank you, Ambassador Schneider, and I apologize for the chairman who is in the chair right now. I actually have an amendment up in another committee, so I am really not here, either.

I know we are set for questions. Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, if you would like to begin.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I do not have anything right now.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Congressman Mica.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to take just a moment to thank Chairman Torricelli for calling these hearings. I think that this is a question that certainly deserves the attention not only of this subcommittee but also of the Congress, so I commend you in addressing a problem that is very important to the United States, and in particular my home State, our home State of Florida.

I did not get a chance to hear the testimony, but I read some of the testimony, and I had a question, if I may, sir. Some of the humanitarian aid that you indicated in your submitted testimony—and you may have referred to it verbally; I believe it is on page 2, the last three paragraphs—talks about some of the humanitarian

aid that is being delivered to Haiti, and yet in the testimony of the representative from CARE, he says, in fact, that a lot of that aid is sitting on the docks in Haiti, and in fact, that a small percentage of the aid is actually getting—I guess it is somewhere up now to around 200,000, still two-thirds less than the targeted goal; and I also came to this committee because I attended the Miami congressional workshop and learned there that the infant mortality death, at least according to one report, is now exceeding 1,000 infants a month. It has increased 1,000 infants a month, infant mortality in Haiti as a result of our sanctions policy.

I would just like your response, if I may.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you, Congressman. First, with respect to the feeding question, CARE has two programs. One was the regular program that had an approved level of about 300,000 beneficiaries. The second one was an emergency program that was to begin last September for another 300,000. The second program was getting started right at the time of the Harlan County and it is a program where the food has to be brought from Port-au-Prince up to Gonaives and then distributed to about 1,500 actual sites around the Northwest.

The regular program has continually had levels of implementation that have been fairly close to the desired levels. The emergency program has been the one where there have been difficulties. That is a program that's called "dry feeding," where they take it in bulk and they provide to the families a designated amount of food. They were hit by the impact of the fuel crisis at the same time that they were setting up. That's why they have had difficulties in raising their levels. I was just speaking with them, and as of February 4, with the humanitarian fuel program that we've put into effect, they've brought about 62 containers from those 600 up to Gonaives and they have increased now their emergency program up to 25,000. Their regular program is 170,000; and they anticipate that they will be able to raise those levels significantly with these 62 containers.

They also now have some 91 trucks that have received fuel to bring additional containers from the warehouse up to Gonaives. So the situation is difficult, but I think we are likely to see those levels increase, and I think that they will concur when they testify.

With respect to the question of infant mortality, we have not seen any drastic increase. The infant mortality rate in Haiti, as an example, prior to the crisis was the worst in the hemisphere. It was approximately 100–104 deaths for every 1,000 live births.

The current situation is approximately the same. You should know that is about double the average in Latin America. The average is around 50 per 1,000 live births.

Mr. MICA. I understand the information that I am getting and that I have obtained is that that has increased again and that our policy, our sanctions, the inability to get this assistance is doubling the infant mortality. I am not a rocket scientist or I don't tend to be an expert in humanitarian efforts, but it seems that our policy is directly increasing the infant mortality, and what concerns me even more is I had heard this week that the administration was looking at possibly proposing to the United Nations or ourselves in

forcing an even stricter embargo which, in fact, would even have a more negative result on our baby-killing policy.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. First, I wouldn't accept that characterization. None of the statistics that we have from any source—any source—show that increase in infant mortality. We have a reporting on a monthly basis from 38 sites around the country of health clinics that provide data on nutrition and on health conditions. In addition, we have tried to collaborate with the range of voluntary agencies that will be testifying after me on this particular issue.

We obviously are greatly concerned. The impact of an embargo and the consequence obviously does affect the country as a whole. In a country as poor as Haiti, there is obviously suffering; however, we have not had any reporting that would reflect a large increase in infant mortality.

Also, I should add that we are part of a humanitarian committee in Haiti with the Pan American Health Organization and other international institutions. Everything that we have seen around the country would show that there has been a slight increase in malnutrition, but that there has been in no way any sharp increase of infant mortality.

Mr. MICA. Well, I have read even some of the preliminary testimony, and that conflicts, and also with observers who have been there most recently in the country, and that also conflicts. Are you in fact, then, recommending to the people that are making the policy as to how the United States should proceed that there is no impact on the well being of the children, infants, elderly and that population?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. What we are recommending is that we need to increase and, if we can, do a better job in providing food and medical facilities to the poor in Haiti. We have increased levels—as I mentioned in my testimony earlier—and we are now reaching approximately 730,000 beneficiaries a day with our programs and with those of other donors. Also, approximately 2 million Haitians are receiving some access to health services funded by USAID through a variety of private organizations, including the international organizations.

Mr. MICA. Well, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to belabor this, and I do appreciate both the consideration given to me as a nonpanel member, but having dealt in Haiti prior to the overthrow in trying to establish some economic programs with the associations both in Haiti and my state and the private sector, I am particularly concerned about the policy that we have and that we may, in fact, be killing the potential—you know, it is easy to give these people a fish and let some of them live for a day or another week, but our policy should be toward teaching them to be fishermen and economic development and restoring democracy; and I think we have failed dramatically, and this policy is now spilling over. It is sort of summed up by the statement I read in the next witness's commentary, and he said "Haiti's poor should not become the victims of good intentions of the international community." And I guess we will hear that from Mr. Novelli, but just my comments, I appreciate your response, and it is concern beyond the boundaries of this panel, and thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. If I could, I agree totally with your comments with respect to Haiti's development, that the only long-term answer is the restoration of democracy and the long-term development that does provide the people of Haiti with the ability for sustainable development.

Mr. MICA. Well, yesterday we had two Haitian children and adults wash up on the shores of our state. I think we are only beginning to see, again, the human misery and result of our lack of having a policy; and obviously if conditions are good or stable there, the people are not risking their lives and their children's lives to make it to our shores.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Thank you. Any questions from Congressman Menendez?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Administrator. I am sorry I have been in and out, but I heard all of your testimony earlier before the votes, and I hope my questions are not repetitive.

Let me ask you, in November of this past year the *New York Times* reported on a Harvard University study that said sanctions in Haiti, crisis in humanitarian action, and it alluded to the fact that the oil embargo and other sanctions kill approximately 1,000 children each month.

Based upon what I heard you say, that this is not—I have heard you before in a briefing, I have heard you now publicly, so I will talk about it—that it has not exponentially increased. If the facts in that study where it talked about the 1,000 children additional each month and that normally 3,000 children in Haiti die under normal conditions; 33 percent is not an exponential figure?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The study itself we have looked at quite carefully. It was based on a single community and with an extrapolation based on that community's experience during a period when the community was also undergoing a serious epidemic of measles.

We do not think—at least from everything that we have looked at, using that study as a basis and sending the CDC down there to look at it—we do not believe that the extrapolation is an accurate assessment of the national situation in Haiti.

Let me just say, Dr. Chen is a good friend, and as soon as that study was released, I sat down with him to talk about it because I was obviously equally concerned. Then we sent it back to our mission and we asked them to go out and inspect the Northwest and attempt to verify the situation.

As I say, there was a unique situation in that community. Our best estimate is that the extrapolation does not accurately reflect national conditions.

Mr. MENENDEZ. What would you say is an accurate extrapolation?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. We have, if you will, the statistics that are received each month from some 38 health clinics throughout Haiti. In addition, we have reporting from the World Health Organization and UNICEF and every other organization. We do not see an increase nationwide of infant mortality in Haiti. The most recent statistics have remained approximately at the extremely unacceptable levels that I mentioned earlier. We are talking about 100 deaths per 1,000 live births. That should not be occurring.

Mr. MENENDEZ. But what you are telling us is that unacceptable figure was a figure that existed preembargo?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. That is correct.

Mr. MENENDEZ. And that there is no change whatsoever as a result of the embargo, or it is—

Mr. SCHNEIDER. One would have to expect that there would be some worsening of conditions. From all of the reporting that we have had, there has not been a significant increase in other indicators that would point toward increases in infant mortality, nor has there been a significant increase in the regularly reported data on infant mortality, either.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Your delivery system, with reference to the aid that you are providing both in terms of food and medical assistance, is unimpeded by those in control on the island?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. It has not been impeded. The concern was, specifically with respect to the embargo of fuel, that we would have difficulties in moving food and medical supplies. We put into place with the United Nations and the OAS this humanitarian fuel program where the fuel is purchased through the international organizations. It's brought in, and the individual PVO's and local non-governmental organizations apply for and get a chit for their allocated levels of fuel. One hundred and twenty-five organizations have done that in the past 3 weeks since the program began. No one has been impeded so far as we know. We are talking here about, perhaps, half of the 420,000 gallons that we brought in, and there has not been any reported interference. We are hopeful it will continue, in the sense that there will not be any obstacles placed to impede the program.

We have also gone forward in arranging for the next shipment so we won't run out before the next shipment arrives. That is the situation at the moment.

Mr. MENENDEZ. One last question, if I may Mr. Chairman, and that is—a two-part question. One is, is there any siphoning off of the goods or services that we are providing, not reaching individuals but being somehow deviated to other purposes? Are you satisfied that in addition to the delivery system being one in which you have no impediments there, is it all accounted for? And secondly, you mentioned three issues with reference to continuing to be able to mitigate the suffering, and do you foresee any impediments to those and if so, what are they?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Let me deal with the second question, and I will come back to the first. With respect to those three issues, one was the fuel. As I said, we have managed to obtain a supply of fuel that thus far has resulted in no impediments in its delivery to the individual organizations which are providing food and medicine.

The second issue is a question of our monitoring system, and as I mentioned, we have an ongoing monitoring system of 38 health clinics around the country. In addition, we have the reporting from the NGO's themselves. We just recently completed, and perhaps CARE will provide some of the information, a joint study with CARE looking at this issue in the Northwest. Our concern was to look at both the system of delivery as well as the current nutritional situation.

And then the third was the question of the need to increase the levels of assistance. Given that our approved levels are 1.4 million, and we have not been able to reach that, we are looking at possible alternatives or additional organizations which can come into the program in order to move the levels of feeding upwards. We have asked the various NGO's to come to us with proposals for doing that.

Going back to your first question, the question of diversion: in this kind of a situation where we have such substantial amounts of food and medicine being provided, I think you would have to say that you would expect that there would be some leakage. Where there is, we go after it, and where we find something to have occurred, we then obviously take measures to prevent it. We do have four people who are permanent investigators looking at just that issue.

You have to remember as to some of the reports that you get back, that we are not the only organization financing delivery of humanitarian assistance. The organizations that we are working with, we think, are themselves making every best effort to prevent diversion, and we have our own people that are double checking.

There are other organizations, and in some instances there may be some diversion that takes place there, and there probably is. We have not been able to identify and significant diversion. There were two instances where we heard of possible diversion. We followed it up and took action to resolve it.

With respect to the fuel, thus far, and I think there was some mention in testimony about this, we have not had any evidence of diversion.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, the reason I ask the question of diversion—which is always a question obvious—is also since you are having what sounds like a smooth process of unimpeded delivery of your aid, I was wondering whether in part because there is a diversion and therefore there is a desire and we are helping indirectly and unwillingly, maybe, but nonetheless helping people who we certainly don't want to help who are oppressing others. Not now, but if you could quantify that for me, I would appreciate that.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Let me just say, very, very small. What we are talking about is a very, very small amount that we have heard of. You will find that this is a very, very poor country. Most of our programs are what are called wet feeding programs. That is, the food is taken to a church, to an orphanage, to a clinic and then the organization there actually prepares it and they serve hot meals to children or lactating mothers or to the elderly. So you know that that it is going to the right people.

There are some programs where you provide dry food. They get their container of rice, et cetera. When you use the word diversion, what I am talking about there is that somebody then takes it and sells it, an individual.

We have not had any evidence, thus far, of vast amounts of this at all.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Mr. DEUTSCH. In terms of specific data that AID or any of the voluntary relief agencies have collected to ascertain the impact of

the sanctions on the poor, is there specific data that you can point to on the impact?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. In terms of the impact of the sanctions themselves?

Mr. DEUTSCH. Correct.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. It is difficult to aggregate, obviously. The sanctions have impacted throughout the society in the sense that, if you have a reduction of fuel, businesses cannot operate and so you have, presumably, an increase in unemployment.

If you are talking about in the agricultural areas, for example, there is a degree of survival skills that the poor utilize. Seventy percent of Haiti is still rural. Most of the impact of the sanctions initially is felt in the urban areas as your commercial embargo takes effect.

But it is not possible, I don't think—it is very difficult to measure the direct impact of the sanctions on the poor, as such. As I say, we have attempted through the monitoring system to determine overall what the increases in levels of malnutrition are, and there have been very slight increases reported.

There are other kinds of impacts, obviously: as the fuel takes effect, you have a reduction in electricity; in some places, it is down to 2 hours a day; in other places it is cutoff entirely. That, obviously, impacts on everybody.

Certain of the manufacturing firms are severely impacted—one example, the sector that was mentioned earlier, the assembly firms, at one point had a level of employment in about September of about 10,000 employees. They are now down to about 7 or 8. At their high point they were probably up to 40.

The problem of fuel ultimately impacts on farmers getting their produce from the fields into the market. In some instances, where that is done by truck, that obviously is going to be impacted by the fuel embargo.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Is there anything in the future over the next couple of weeks, days, or months that you are trying to get more information specifically about the impact? If we are hearing 1,000 children a month dying—

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I don't believe that that is a good statistic. We have gone out with the CDC to our monitoring centers to try and determine whether there are any flaws in the reporting. We intend also, as I mentioned earlier, to get a group of investigators to go out into areas—particularly isolated areas—where we may not have received information in order to try and get additional reports.

Mr. DEUTSCH. One last question. I am assuming you have seen a press account that President Aristide made a statement yesterday that he is disagreeing with President Clinton's proposal—or really, policy—of asking Haitians to stay in Haiti, and Aristide in that comment seems to be—or is he signaling encouragement to people to flee Haiti? Have you seen the story, the AP wire service?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I did. What I would like to do, if I could, since that is really for some one in of the State Department to respond. I would like to take that question and have a response prepared for the committee.

Mr. DEUTSCH. OK. I appreciate your time. Any further questions? Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you.

Mr. DEUTSCH. We are going to have a new panel and a new chair, so thank you very much.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Our next panel, if they would step up, Mr. William Novelli, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer of CARE; Mr. Michael Wiest, Deputy Executive Director of Catholic Relief Services; and Mr. John Hammock, Executive Director of Oxfam America. And we will start off in that order, with Mr. Novelli first.

STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM NOVELLI, EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF CARE

Mr. NOVELLI. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, my name is Bill Novelli. I am the executive vice president of CARE and its chief operating officer. On behalf of CARE I would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to testify on the urgent topic of humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti.

CARE has maintained an uninterrupted presence in Haiti since 1959. Chronic economic and political instability have made it very difficult to promote sustainable development there. Thus, we watched with cautious optimism the establishment of Haiti's first constitutional democracy.

In 50 years of relief and development work, CARE has learned that sustainable development cannot reach its fullest potential in an environment of endemic poverty and economic neglect of the society at large, so we strongly support the restoration of the democratic process in Haiti. Decades of bad government have stripped the Haitian people of their most basic human needs and rights. CARE commends the position taken by the United States, the OAS, the U.N. and the friends of Haiti on the restoration of democracy there.

We also recognize the need for using sanctions against those who illegally seize power. However, sanctions must be accompanied by a comprehensive humanitarian assistance program. Haiti's poverty is well documented, but statistics alone cannot adequately convey the persistent misery suffered by the majority of the Haitian people throughout their lives.

Northwest Haiti where CARE presently targets most of its programs has always been the poorest region in the country. People there have been dealt a series of crushing blows—years of drought, massive deforestation, low crop yields and the additional hardships caused by sanctions.

The effect of rising food prices—about 50 percent higher than a year ago—leaves an already vulnerable population in greater jeopardy. A recent USAID monitoring report on Haiti for December 1993 documents the continuing decline in the Northwest. Total malnutrition rose in this area, a trend begun earlier in the year. Twenty-five percent of infants born in the Northwest are under weight, food stocks here and in the North are desperately low, and even the production of traditional famine foods such as green man-goes is down.

CARE, with funding from USAID, the American public, CARE International, the Canadian Government, and others is operating a supplemental feeding program for the nutritionally vulnerable in northwest Haiti. This program requires approximately 4,000 metric tons of food per month for a target of 620,000 people.

The difficulties of working under the complicated political and economic conditions created by this embargo are formidable. At present, about 550 shipping containers of much-needed food donated by the U.S. Government are in the harbor in Port-au-Prince.

Mr. Chairman, this number is down since we presented our written testimony, and I believe that Mr. Schneider presented the figures that are very promising; that is to say that we are able to get 62 of those containers up to Gonaives in the last week, and right now we have about 91 trucks on the road. So, the food is moving from the harbor now. The backlog, of course, was caused by the need for fuel and spare parts for the trucks which deliver the food to our distribution points.

While these commodities remain at the port, our food inventory levels in the Northwest are critically low, and as I say, they are now beginning to rebuild and we expect the beneficiaries fed to now go up.

Immediately preceding the startup of the UN's emergency fuel program, which commenced on January 15, the number of recipients which we were able to reach had dropped dramatically to about 117,000. As of today, that number is about 200,000. It is still, though, two-thirds less than our targeted goal. Now, if all goes relatively smoothly, it will still require several weeks to reach full recipient levels.

The situation in Haiti is very bad right now, but hunger and poverty in Haiti are not entirely consequences of the embargo, in our view. The embargo has only exacerbated an already fragile situation for Haiti's poor majority. Haiti is a food-deficit country where most of the citizens live on the edge. Even if the democratic process were restored today, there would remain a large impoverished and illiterate population.

As it is clear to the international community that tightening sanctions is a necessary means to restore the democratic process there, then it must be equally clear that there has to be an adequate immediate and longer term humanitarian assistance program in place. Haiti's poor should not be the victims of the good intentions of the international community.

If and when the sanctions are tightened, we require the following to carry out an effective assistance program in Haiti for at least the next 6 months. An extension through July of the emergency part of the feeding program, which Mr. Schneider explained was the dry feeding. Expedited issuance of export licenses and waivers from the sanctions committee and the office of foreign assets controlled in the U.S. Treasury Department to meet procurement and delivery of additional trucks, spare parts, spare engines, tools and tires. And a timely and regular delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, including the emergency fuel.

In summary, CARE strongly supports the restoration of the democratic process and recognizes the need for using sanctions. We

commend the position taken by the United States, the OAS, the friends of Haiti, and the U.N. on restoring democracy there.

In accord with international principles, we believe it is essential that the international community provide adequate humanitarian assistance during this embargo and afterward to protect the most vulnerable people from its intended consequences. Despite the formidable obstacles created by the embargo, CARE, with assistance from the U.S. Government, the American public, and others, will continue to do our very best to mitigate the adverse effect of sanctions on the most vulnerable people in Haiti. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Novelli appears in the appendix.]

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you. We will next hear from Mr. Michael R. Wiest.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL R. WIEST, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Mr. WIEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Michael Wiest. I am the deputy executive director of Catholic Relief Services, and I just returned from a 1-week-long visit to Haiti. I returned on Monday, and I went there on my first visit to learn about the Catholic Relief Services relief and development efforts in the country. We have a program of emergency and development assistance of approximately \$9 million per year.

I traveled from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes to Jeremie by road, and I visited many schools, markets, hospitals, villages, and I met with Catholic church authorities.

I want to emphasize that I am no expert on Haiti, having recently been returned from over 20 years working in Africa and Asia. I certainly do not have as much area knowledge as most of the people in this room; however, I have over 20 years' experience in prefamine and food insecure and famine circumstances on other continents, especially in Ethiopia, Sudan, Zimbabwe, northern Kenya, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mauritania. My impressions in Haiti are shaped by these food security experiences.

First of all, in traveling through the southern peninsula in Haiti, one is shocked by the fact that the public infrastructure in Haiti is as poor as the poorest of African countries. It is obvious that public investment in rural areas has been minimal over the past decades; however, free market mechanisms have not been suppressed as they were in Ghana, Ethiopia and Tanzania. As a consequence, Haitians are better able than these other populations to cope with food security problems.

Also, nature is still more forgiving and giving than in other countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, and the Sahel and is better able to sustain communities in emergency times such as the present.

Also, children are in better health than most African children, at least by appearance, and are less susceptible in the short term to serious malnutrition.

Nonetheless, suffering is relative to the circumstance, and the Haitian people are suffering intensely. There is growing economic and food insecurity brought about principally by economic contraction, which has been at approximately half a percent since 1980 per year; agricultural decline, which has reduced at approximately 2 percent per year since 1980; and which has been exacerbated by

recent sharp price increases partially brought about by the increase in fuel costs.

Although there is a long way to go in the southern peninsula before classic famine occurs, the population is experiencing increases in illness, especially diarrhea and respiratory infection, and localized increases in child malnutrition.

More alarmingly, tuberculosis is on the rise and there is great risk of cholera outbreak resulting from impure water.

Finally, it is evident, even to the nonprofessional, that the environment is deteriorating. Charcoal is the only commodity which has decreased in price, as peasants glut the market in an attempt to increase their meager incomes. Mountains with access to principal roads are becoming deforested.

Although famine is not likely in the southern peninsula in the short term, without an upturn in the economy, stabilization of the environment, and without responsive and principled government which are necessary to sustain both, Haiti will suffer from Sahel-type famine in the not too distant future.

In response to the current economic health and food security crisis, Catholic Relief Services is planning to increase its programming, especially in regard to school and institutional feeding, water resources development, and provisions of medicine and health care. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wiest appears in the appendix.]

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you. We will now hear from Mr. Hammock.

STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN HAMMOCK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OXFAM AMERICA

Mr. HAMMOCK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Oxfam America is a nonpartisan agency which has been working in Haiti for many years, has an office there and a representative working primarily on long-term development issues in Haiti.

I have lived in the Caribbean myself for 18 years. I have been visiting and working in Haiti since 1971, and I was just there 3 months ago. Haiti is not Bosnia. In Bosnia sometimes it's hard to know who to blame for what is happening. It is not confusing in Haiti. It is clear that who is causing the problems in Haiti. The problem is the military and the police that overthrew a democratically elected government 2 years ago. The problems are the thugs who waved their guns on a dock in October and blocked a U.N. ship from landing. The problem is the power-hungry—excuse the word—assassins who wield power through a ruthless reign of terror.

I was there 3 months ago, and the number of people being shot on the street every day is appalling. A reign of terror which includes the murdering not only of the minister of justice of the elected government in front of the Sacrecoeur Church, but also a reign of terror which is more insidious and more pervasive by reaching out at all levels of society and killing anybody who deems it important to speak out.

It is important for you to know that this reign of terror has made long-term development in Haiti impossible at this time. Organiza-

tions with which Oxfam American has worked for years have been destroyed; programs that we have helped to start have been purposely wiped out by the military leaders, by rulers, and the leaders that we have worked with for years have been killed, are now in the United States, or are in hiding.

Let me make sure that you understand very clearly what I am saying. There has been a systematic wiping out of all popular organizations in Haiti that at all challenge the dictatorship or try to do any type of ongoing work in that country. There are over 400,000 people in hiding in Haiti at this time. I spoke to people underground there 3 months ago, and those people are very clear about what is happening in Haiti, and you need to understand that in order to then move to the next point.

The restoration of the democracy is absolutely crucial to the long-term development of Haiti. Some people say that that's all well and good, but people are suffering now under the embargo, and shouldn't something be done about the embargo. Garbage is piled high in the streets, absolutely. The countryside is devastated ecologically, absolutely. People have no medicine, children are hungry, absolutely. But what caused this? The embargo? Absolutely not.

If you look at the history of Haiti, Haiti has been poor for years. I was as shocked and appalled in 1971 when I went to Haiti for the first time. Children have been malnourished, medicine has been in short supply for years. Haiti has been the poorest country in this hemisphere for years. Why? Not because of the current embargo, but rather because of policies of the Haitian Government run by a tiny elite, reinforced by a military that is ruthless and does not care for its people.

And now it is these same military who have cynically discovered poor people and are using poor people in the public relations battle that is going on between that military and the Aristide government. They have argued that the short-term pain of the embargo is too much for the poor. But one man told me when I was in Haiti, echoing what a lot of people told me, "I have been living under an embargo all my life. I have had no education, very little food and absolutely no hope." The key is not the embargo. The key is what are the policies to change the current situation. What can we do?

Let me be brief. First, we must be very clear what is at the root cause of the problem and have a clear goal. The goal is to get rid of the current military rulers of Haiti as a precondition for democracy which is a precondition for long-term development, which is what Oxfam America is interested in.

Second, this country—the United States—must have one clear and unambiguous consistent policy on Haiti. We have not had that. It must speak with one voice forcefully. It must not send conflicting signals to the military. The CIA and the Defense Department and others must work within the guidelines of a clear policy, not outside of them; and we need to end our vacillation which goes on even as we speak in terms of what is happening with the U.N. resolutions that are being put forth by the French.

Third, we must strengthen the embargo. The embargo as it currently stands is not working. I believe that it needs to be strengthened at this point in terms of hurting and trying to do what we want, which is to restore the elected government. It needs to be

strictly enforced. We need to expand freezing of assets in the United States of a broader number of people, as Mr. Torricelli said earlier, to include all 950 military officers rather than just the 500 that are on that list right now.

We must seal the Dominican Republic border, which at this time is allowing fuel to go to people who have the money to purchase it; and I disagree with assessments that have been made by the administration on that point.

Fourth, we must take measures immediately to continue to increase humanitarian assistance in Haiti. The sending of the ship of fuel shows that we can provide assistance in Haiti at this time. It needs to be increased at all levels through the agencies that have just testified and through other agencies so that we, in fact, do ameliorate some of the effects of the embargo.

And fifth, when democracy is restored, aid must flow—not through the elite and the organizations in Haiti which I believe often have helped to perpetuate the problem—but we need to have aid flow through popular organizations, organizations that actually are of the poor and that deal with long-term solutions to the problems of Haiti.

This will require a flexible USAID, and I recommend that Congress make Haiti a special country with a special case so that in fact AID is not ruled by all the requirements and regulations that it has to meet. For example, right now, to give a \$5,000 grant to a Haitian group, it's probably got to spend much more than that to do the accounting on that grant. That needs to change so that they can be flexible and provide the kind of assistance needed when democracy is restored in Haiti.

Let me end by saying that I was really struck when I was in Haiti. I've been to many countries throughout the world. I have never been as depressed as I was when I went to Haiti. The situation there is alarming. The situation is one that requires clear and consistent action at this time. Every Haitian is a human being who has a tremendous potential, and that potential has got to be liberated. The only way that we are going to liberate the potential of the Haitian people is by having democracy in that country. Democracy needs to be restored if we are going to have long-term development. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hammock appears in the appendix.]

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Hammock. Thank you to the entire panel.

The chair recognizes the lady from Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Quick comment to say that I agree with the last witness' analysis of the embargo and the ones who are truly guilty of starving the Haitian population. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you. I have one or two questions, starting with Mr. Novelli. As I read and listened to your statement, on your fourth paragraph, are you telling us that what we are doing is not enough?

Mr. NOVELLI. At this point, CARE believes that with the advent of the new U.N. fuel program we can reach the peak levels of feeding that we are targeting.

It is difficult to talk about enough because the poverty is so abject and the misery is so complete that there can always be more that is done.

At this time, the fuel program seems to be working. We are not having problems at the moment with security. From a standpoint of just thinking about the humanitarian program, I would say that we could do a better job of monitoring, and Assistant Administrator Schneider addressed that. There is a CDC team in the field now. I think that is an important thing to do.

We have to make sure the fuel keeps flowing. The other elements that I was talking about in terms of spare parts and so forth, that would be an adequate level of effort to keep the status quo. It is difficult to quantify the status quo and to say that it is acceptable.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, maybe I should clarify my question. I think you have answered it, anyway, but I wasn't suggesting in the longer problem of Haitian poverty and need, which predates the question of the embargo. I was referring to my question in the context of the embargo, are you telling us we are not doing enough. I gather that you are saying that for the moment—correct me if I am wrong—assuming the fuel continues to flow, that we are doing enough as it relates to the imposition of the embargo. Not the longer-term question about the needs for the Haitian people that predicated the embargo; or is that not correct?

Mr. NOVELLI. You are speaking about the humanitarian endeavor.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes.

Mr. NOVELLI. I think that we could be doing more in many respects. It has been very difficult, as we have all said, to work there. The key question that you kept asking earlier about whether there is a deterioration in health status, I think, is the crux of the issue; and there are many suggestions that there is a deterioration, and the AID monitoring report of December suggested in many parts of the country there are, we believe that is taking place; although, as I say, it is very difficult to quantify. I would stay the course as it is now being conducted regarding the humanitarian program and monitor it very closely.

Mr. MENENDEZ. The deterioration of the health status that you just said is one issue. Is it leading to increased mortality rates?

Mr. NOVELLI. I do not know the answer to the question. I know that it is very difficult to quantify anything in Haiti. Mr. Schneider referred to an AID-funded study that CARE and AID just conducted. It is still in the preliminary stages of reporting on, but since he mentioned it, I would say, if I may quote from it, that there has been a long history of nutrition deficits in the northwest region. These attenuate the continual downward trends in resource depletion and environmental degradation. There is a high prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition. These do not at this time reflect famine conditions and also indicate there are no cases of severe acute malnutrition.

So, what that suggests to us is there are real problems, there is malnutrition, but we have not reached famine levels at this time.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Are you in a position to comment—are you in agreement with the Administrator's comments as it relates to the

Harvard report, that it is an isolated set of circumstances from which it is not appropriate to extrapolate?

Mr. NOVELLI. We did not do the same analysis of that report that USAID did. We recognize that it was difficult to extrapolate from that report to the entire country. I would prefer to say and hope that the CDC assessment that is being conducted now will give us a much better picture.

Mr. HAMMOCK. Mr. Congressman, if I might jump in on that just briefly, I have known Dr. Chen for many years, and we have worked together in the city of Boston for many years. His study is very clearly based on the study of one community. He states in his study that he is extrapolating from data in one community; and so I think that is the given. What Mr. Schneider was saying is that he did not necessarily agree with the idea of taking that one community, which was undergoing a measles epidemic at the time, to be able to extrapolate to the whole country.

Mr. MENENDEZ. But he went further than that. He went further to say that the available data is such that he sees no significant increase in particularly infant mortality rates. My question, then, since you have joined in and said that in fact this is a limited study based on one location and some specific unique circumstances. Are you in a position to be in agreement with Mr. Schneider?

Mr. HAMMOCK. Personally, when I was in AID in October/November reviewing the data there with AID—and this is now data just through last October, not in the last 2 or 3 months—the data there seemed fairly clear.

Now, what Mr. Schneider is saying that that data has continued to show the same results for the next 3 months, I have no reason to doubt the veracity of that.

Mr. MENENDEZ. But you have none of your own.

Mr. HAMMOCK. No.

Mr. MENENDEZ. With reference to the number in your last set of summaries, Mr. Novelli, you talked about that the United States as well as the other international donors need to continue to work to mitigate the adverse impacts.

Who are the other international donors that are participating and to what extent are they participating?

Mr. NOVELLI. CARE receives most of its food from the U.S. Government. In addition to that, we receive food from the Canadian Government. It is a very important portion of the whole. It is herring—fish—which we use to supplement the U.S. Government food. The fish is for the wet feeding program. We don't include it with the emergency dry feeding program.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Is that it?

Mr. NOVELLI. We also receive—

Mr. MENENDEZ. I mean it on behalf of the international community.

Mr. NOVELLI. We also receive monetary support from other CARES in other parts of the world—that is money, not commodity.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Are any of you in a position to answer the question, are there other countries that are assisting in the humanitarian other than the United States and Canada?

Mr. Wiest. We receive assistance not from other governments but from other countries through our network of Catholic agencies

in Europe—very large agencies such as Miserior provide assistance. We also receive significant medical assistance from Catholic Medical Mission Board in the United States that comes from American pharmaceutical companies.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I see.

Mr. HAMMOCK. The same is true for Oxfam in terms of England, Canada and Australia; but it is also true that besides these three agencies there is government money coming from Europe to Haiti. I know that the EEC is a major contributor also in Haiti.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Let me ask this question. It seems that you all agree that the conditions in Haiti are preembargo, not necessarily post-embargo in terms of—let's see how you use your own words. Hunger and poverty in Haiti are not consequences of the embargo, and I think similar statements were made. Is that a unanimous statement?

Mr. WIEST. I would say they are not principally the consequences. They are principally the consequences of economic downturn over the past 12, 13, 14 years and decrease in agricultural production and increase in population. Those are the principal—and environmental deterioration.

Certainly, the rise in the cost of fuel since the embargo has had an effect on rural communities, but also in our statistics which are more limited than the USAID statistics, we do not see a sharp deterioration in child malnutrition. We have seen anecdotal cases. I visited the hospital in Les Cayes, I visited the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Theresa's group, in Jeremie. There are reports of increased cases of tuberculosis and respiratory infection and child abandonment in certain circumstances, but on a nationwide scale, or in our case with the southern peninsula, we have not seen any statistics that indicate significant downturn in the nutritional status of the population.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Attempting to quantify the differences pre- and post-embargo is what I am trying to grasp, and I gather that that is a difficult proposition.

Mr. NOVELLI. Quantifying anything in Haiti is a difficult proposition. I think that what we are agreeing upon here is that there is a long downslide in the country—environmentally and in terms of health and in virtually every sector—and that one might presume that the embargo has contributed to it.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Let me ask you again. You say here CRS feels that the international community needs to do much more to mitigate Haiti's misery.

What is it that you believe needs to be done? Is it different than Mr. Novelli's comments, are they the same or—

Mr. WIEST. Well, I don't know if it is much different. I think now since the fuel problem has been largely alleviated since January, for Catholic Relief Services in Haiti from a planning point of view, it is a new universe; and we are looking to significantly expand our coverage in the southern peninsula, especially through schools.

Before, our people in our program office in Port-au-Prince were not considering outreach into other schools, other orphanages, other dispensaries. Now we are, and we are considering putting a higher level public health specialist and emergency coordinator in

Haiti to try to increase perhaps by as much as 50 percent our program volume. And that is a result of the fuel availability.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Hammock, to close with you, in your written text you say that the Dominican Republic has begun to crack down on the widespread illegal passage of petrol across the border with Haiti because it has caused fuel shortages within the Dominican villages, but in your suggestions for diplomacy and sanctions, suggest that the United States and the U.N. must threaten the Dominican Republic with sanctions if it fails to enforce the embargo at the border. Which is it?

Mr. HAMMOCK. We have very recent indications that there is still fuel going across the border from the Dominican Republic into Haiti, and that comes from eyewitnesses who are there at the border not only of Oxfam staff but of other agencies. That is why I said the embargo is not working. In large measure, the current embargo, if you have money in Haiti you can still buy fuel, and that tends to be people in the elite, etc. So that it is clear that the border with Haiti has to be sealed right now for fuel, but I would hope that it should be sealed for other items, as well.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Is it a question of will of the Government of the Dominican Republic or capacity?

Mr. HAMMOCK. That is a very good question. The Government of the Dominican Republic, to be honest, has said repeatedly that it is in favor of doing all it can to stop the embargo, but the history of the Dominican Republic with Haiti is very long. The animosity between the Dominican Republic and the current elected Government of Haiti is very long, and I don't know the answer specifically to your question, whether or not its government is doing everything it can.

I believe that it is a difficult border to patrol. In most countries where we've seen embargoes, there is always a black market, and it is hard to stop.

Mr. MENENDEZ. It is that long-standing history and what you said, the animosity that would make me think that the Dominican Republic would actually seek to enforce the embargo versus, in fact, not do it; and so that is why I asked the question, hence, is it will or capacity.

It would seem that based on history it would be more capacity than will, is the problem.

Mr. HAMMOCK. That may be true, except my own interpretation of the Dominican Republic is that the current President of the Dominican Republic has not had a very good standing relationship with the current elected President of Haiti, and I would think that there may be some concern about the return of that elected government; but to be honest, I am speculating.

Mr. WIEST. I would like to comment on the administration of the embargo, too, if I could, please. I was there last week, and during my trip I discussed with dozens of people just this issue. No one that I talked with in Haiti is in favor of the embargo as it is currently being administered.

Mr. HAMMOCK. This is very true.

Mr. WIEST. No one on either side of the issue. I spoke with people who were very conservative and felt the embargo was evil in that it is having such a devastating impact on the poor; but even

those that were pro-Aristide people who were very revolutionary in their rhetoric called this particular embargo immoral in that the only impact was on the poor and had no impact on the rich. At least that is how it is perceived.

Anyone who has the financial wherewithal can buy petrol in Haiti.

Mr. MENENDEZ. How does that reconcile with your statement, Mr. Hammock, that there are signs that the 3-month-old oil and arms embargo appears to be working. In Haiti, and here in the United States, supporters of democracy are anxiously awaiting the proposed resolution by the United States, Canada, France and Venezuela to the U.N. Security Council for tougher sanctions?

Mr. HAMMOCK. Well, I absolutely agree with the comment just made. The current embargo does not work, and people on all sides of it are saying on one hand let's get rid of it; on the other hand, let's tighten it. I feel very strongly that the current embargo does not work and needs to be tightened.

What I am talking about is the reported splits that are now taking place between the military and the police inside Haiti and the reported—these are in the press—statements of the press which claim there is some pressure being brought to bear on the military now by some members of the elite, which wasn't the case before.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Is that your understanding, Mr. Wiest, that what they are seeking is a stronger embargo that would be more effective?

Mr. Wiest. People on one side of the issue, people who are very close to President Aristide that I met with, but especially some priests who are close associates of his use the word criminal, immoral as it is currently being administered; that there is even rumors that it's an arrangement between the U.S. Government and the military elite to enrich the elite and pauperize the poor. I mean, it goes that far. People are so depressed and so frightened that they extrapolate from these type situations, but no one on either side of the issue is happy with the embargo as it is currently being administered—that I talked to, anyway, in a week's travel.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, I want to thank the panel for their presentation. We commend you for your work, your humanitarian work in Haiti, and hopefully you will continue to give us insights to the conditions there. Thank you so much.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:35 p.m., the hearing was concluded.]

APPENDIX

OPENING STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT G. TORRICELLI ON HUMANITARIAN RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI

Nearly two-and-a-half years after the overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti remains one of the United States' most frustrating and intractable foreign policy dilemmas. We have attempted to bring back President Aristide's democratically elected government through economic sanctions and isolation, and we have tried negotiation and conciliation. Not only has neither approach worked, but the dilemma has grown worse.

Today, we find ourselves at a crossroads. After Haiti's military leaders reneged on the negotiated settlement at Governors Island, the United Nations reimposed an oil and arms embargo on Haiti. The result has been increased suffering among the poorest segments of Haiti's population, but little movement by the Haitian military to give up the reins of power.

We cannot lose sight of the fact that the tiny nation of Haiti poses no security threat to the United States. Indeed, the primary United States interest in Haiti must be to help the Haitian people and to strengthen democracy there so that asylum-seeking Haitians need not risk their lives to sail to the United States.

As a result, my belief is that a widening of the embargo to include all commercial trade—as suggested by the United States, France, Canada and Venezuela—is a terrible idea. This approach will not bring the military leaders to their knees, and will only harm those we are seeking most to help in Haiti.

Relief workers in Haiti have reported that since the oil embargo was reimposed in October, transportation to most rural areas has all but shut down. As a result, the suffering of the hundreds of thousands of Haitians who depend upon foreign relief organizations has grown worse.

In fact, at one point last month, CARE reported that, the number of daily meals they were able to provide had dropped from 620,000 to 117,000, due primarily to a lack of fuel. Today, the level has increased to a little over 200,000, which means that over 400,000 meals still are not being delivered.

Instead of a full-scale commercial embargo on Haiti, we should be instituting other sanctions that would precisely target Haiti's military leaders. I was pleased to see the "Four Friends" come around to the idea of freezing more of the foreign holdings of Haitian military officers and their supporters, revoking visas and banning non-commercial flights.

Now we must go one step further. Additional military officers can and should be placed on the list, and we must do a better job circulating that list among other countries. In fact, I believe that the list of 520 or so officers should be increased to include all 925 members of the officer corps. In addition, the ban on flights should be extended to commercial, as well as non-commercial aircraft.

The purpose of today's hearing is to find out first-hand the effects of the oil embargo and the status of humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti.

We will be hearing from Mark Schneider of the United States Agency for International Development, and from representatives from three humanitarian relief groups who have been on the ground in Haiti. We will, of course, be asking our witnesses for our Judgement on the impact of a full commercial embargo and how effective such an embargo would be in bringing about the desired results in Haiti.

With the Four Friends on the verge of asking the United Nations to consider extending the embargo, it is imperative that we know how widespread are conditions of malnutrition in Haiti and to what extent relief efforts are most vulnerable segments of the population.

Only by obtaining answers to those questions can we responsibly consider a proposal that could lead to even greater famine in one of the world's poorest and most beleaguered nations.

Finally, I would like to add that while today's hearing will not specifically address the issue of Haitian refugees, I did find quite disturbing President Aristide's criticisms yesterday of the Clinton Administration policy to return refugees to Haiti.

Encouraging refugees to flee Haiti in open boats on the high seas may serve his political interests, but it also threatens massive loss of life and the possible violation of U.S. law. This criticism will not be well received by those in the United States Government who have questioned Aristide's judgement, but who are sensitive to the restoration of his government.

STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE MARK L. SCHNEIDER
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS
FEBRUARY 9, 1994

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to appear before your committee today. It affords me a chance to explain to the public the critical importance of the United States' assistance program to Haiti in supporting United States foreign policy and in helping to alleviate suffering in that country.

This Administration is clear about its objectives: we support the return of constitutional government and of the Haitian people's choice as President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. We believe only the fulfillment of the democratically expressed will of the Haitian people can serve as a basis for responsive and responsible governance. Only when Haitian institutions of authority recognize and address the needs of the people will the cycle of political and social instability end. U.S. policy pursues these objectives, along with our humanitarian goals.

Haiti and its people are enduring a tragedy brought on by the refusal of the military and their small band of supporters to accept full constitutional democracy. The people of Haiti spoke clearly when they elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by an overwhelming majority. At the same time, they elected a multi-party Parliament. In that country's troubled history, the election of 1990 marked a moment of hope and the international community pledged its support to that new government. Eight months later, a coup led by the military toppled that regime and drove the President into exile. Human rights abuse, fear and suffering have followed.

The international community, through the OAS and later the UN, rejected the attempts at extra-constitutional rule. Sanctions were imposed, including a voluntary commercial embargo under the OAS. Last July the Governors Island Accord was signed under international auspices with the United States fully engaged in seeking a negotiated solution to the crisis. It had been hoped that by October 30, the provisions of that agreement would have been implemented and President Aristide would have returned. The refusal of the military to permit the arrival of the Harlan County once again produced a new wave of dismay in Haiti. The US responded with additional targeted sanctions on the officers involved and subsequently supported a fuel embargo adopted by the United Nations.

Throughout this process, efforts by the Four Friends, including US, have sought to help the Haitian people find a path out of this crisis which would produce a restoration of constitutional government.

From the first set of sanctions adopted by the OAS and later with the UN fuel embargo, the United States recognized that there was a parallel responsibility to increase our humanitarian relief programs in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, let me discuss the humanitarian relief programs in the context of Haitian economic and social conditions.

Haiti was the poorest country in the hemisphere before 1990 and remains the poorest country in the region today. Its per capita income is estimated by the World Bank as 370. At the same time, its infant mortality and child mortality statistics were and are among the worst in the region.

In Haiti, the U.S. Agency for International Development maintains one of its largest per capita humanitarian efforts anywhere in the world, reserving in this fiscal year approximately \$60 million. Today, our program provides food and basic health care to millions of Haitians with no other access to such services. In concert with other humanitarian donors, we have constructed a social safety net for nearly 20% of Haiti's population. Allow me to briefly describe our program and to touch on three near-term issues for maintaining it.

USAID's feeding program delivers more than \$17 million per year of PL 480 Title II foods through three U.S. voluntary agencies -- CARE, CRS and ADRA -- to needy schoolchildren, mothers and infants, and the elderly. Starting last September, we added a \$2.1 million emergency feeding program for particularly vulnerable groups in the isolated Northwest. Nearly one million recipients are authorized to receive help daily under these programs, with about 500,000 currently being fed.

Other major food aid donors include: the EEC (currently feeding 135,000 beneficiaries out of 267,500 approved); the World Food Program (currently feeding 81,000 beneficiaries out of 142,000 approved); and Canada (feeding 60,000 beneficiaries against an approved level of 50,000.) All food donors in Port-au-Prince collaborate closely. EEC and WFP even attend USAID's biweekly meetings with their cooperating food PVOs.

Besides PL 480 Title II feeding programs, the United States also signed with President Aristide late in FY 1993 a PL 480 Title III agreement for \$20 million of wheat flour. This flour has been delivered and is being sold to bakeries to produce bread and other food for the commercial market. The intent of this program, apart from balance-of-payments support, is to moderate the price of flour so that commercial food prices will remain affordable to the poor, and to generate local currencies to augment the dollar resources supporting the humanitarian program.

USAID also provides access to basic health services for nearly two million Haitians. This includes child survival services such as vaccinations, nutritional surveillance, oral rehydration therapy and treatment of acute respiratory infections to some 300,000 Haitian children. AIDS and family planning services are provided to another 750,000 to 1 million Haitians in both urban and isolated rural areas.

Other major donors in the health arena include: EEC (channelling its funds through PAHO, Medecins sans Frontieres, and the Red Cross); UN organizations (with assistance for midwife training, malaria prevention, potable water, child survival); and WFP (assisting some 10,000 tuberculosis patients through hospitals). PAHO is coordinating a joint donor/PVO health committee which provides a forum for discussing health conditions and also executes for donors in 1993 \$12 million of health activities.

Another major element of USAID's current humanitarian portfolio in Haiti is a \$32 million initiative begun last September to fund short-term jobs to clean up garbage and dispose of solid waste, clean drainage canals, and repair roads needed to deliver humanitarian food and health services. Implemented through three U.S. PVOs, the Pan American Development Foundation, Planning Assistance, and the Cooperative Housing Foundation, this program has already provided income and basic infrastructure repair by financing nearly 9,000 person-months of work for 5,500 extremely poor people. For each person employed, up to five fewer people will use the already strained feeding centers spread throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, USAID is concentrating on maintaining these feeding health activities but they do not represent the entirety of our program. In July through September 1993, USAID prepared a package of activities to accompany and support the restoration of constitutional government, including: assistance for clearing Haiti's arrears with the IFIs; an initiative to reform the administration of justice; the short-term employment generation project linked to infrastructure repair I already mentioned; and, a program to provide technical assistance in reforming economic policy and public administration. When Haiti's military prevented the implementation of the Governor's Island Accord and the return of President Aristide, most of these transitional activities

were put on temporary hold. However, they can be quickly reactivated upon resolution of the political crisis.

I would also note that USAID has activities in place that address longer-term development, such as projects in democracy strengthening, microenterprise development and environmentally-sustainable agriculture. These were developed before the 1991 coup d'etat and are now operating at less than full capacity because of the political turmoil. The U.S. is prepared to help Haiti advance toward its long delayed development needs when constitutional government is reestablished.

Meanwhile, Mr. Chairman, there are a number of issues key to our continuing ability to mitigate suffering in the near term. I would like to highlight three of them: the need for continued fuel availability, the need for timely monitoring of social and nutritional conditions, and the need for continued close cooperation with U.S. and Haitian voluntary agencies and with other donors.

When it became clear in November that Haiti's fuel reserve would soon run out due to the embargo, the United States consulted with President Aristide and his government and took action to ensure fuel delivery for humanitarian programs. USAID fielded an interagency team to design an emergency fuel delivery plan. The U.S. negotiated with the United Nations, OAS and PAHO to establish and run such a system. The formal request to permit the establishment of this system was made by Prime Minister Malval to the Exceptions Committee of the United Nations Security Council and PAHO--with its proven on-the-ground implementation capacity--was designated by the UN to implement the plan. While seeking multi-donor funding to support this international effort, the United States now bears the full costs of this system.

Despite widespread initial concern that the first humanitarian fuel tanker would be turned away by the Haitian military authorities or that fuel deliveries would be diverted by bandits, we have so far seen a smooth and efficient operation. As of a week ago, some 125 organizations lifted fuel without interference. This will enable them to keep their feeding and health programs going. A second shipment of fuel is expected in the near future to enable humanitarian activities to continue through March.

We are also committed to ensuring -- to the greatest extent possible -- that the level and targeting of donor food aid is sufficient. Haitians are living a marginal existence and struggling to survive another dry season. We must keep a sharp vigil on the nutritional status of the Haitian people, particularly those in isolated pockets where conditions might deteriorate rapidly.

USAID collects data from 38 health clinics around Haiti -- the most systematic and accurate data regularly available from any source -- but this system was designed for long-term trends analysis and operates with a 4-6 week time lag between data collection and publication. The methodology and relevance of this monitoring system has been validated in two surveys by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. USAID also recently undertook with CARE an in-depth food security assessment of their existing programs in Northwest Haiti. Finally, recognizing the possibility that particular communities may have severe food needs at this time, we are developing a rapid assessment capability to ensure food and other humanitarian aid is appropriately targeted and effectively used.

Finally, I would like to recognize and applaud the efforts of our cooperating agencies in food distribution, particularly Catholic Relief Services, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency and CARE. They are working under difficult circumstances, sometimes taking personal risks, to ensure that the destitute get a break from the grinding economic pressures caused by military intransigence in the face of the international embargo. The U.S. values the work of these voluntary agencies and relies on continued close cooperation with them.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, during this time in which the international community has adopted a stringent embargo on Haiti, USAID has taken a lead role in responding to the international humanitarian obligation to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable groups in Haiti. We are prepared to strengthen our efforts, along with those of other donor organizations, as the circumstances demand. However, the only sure answer to Haiti's crisis is restoration of democratic government and a national commitment to democracy, development, and justice.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity to appear before your committee.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM D. NOVELLI
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT
CARE
before the
Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs
Committee on Foreign Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
February 9, 1994

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Bill Novelli. I am the Executive Vice-President of CARE and its Chief Operating Officer. On behalf of CARE, I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify on a most urgent topic, humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti.

CARE has maintained an uninterrupted presence in Haiti since 1959. During the past thirty-five years, chronic economic and political instability has made difficult efforts to promote sustainable development there. As such CARE watched with cautious optimism the establishment of Haiti's first constitutional democracy. In over fifty years of relief and development work among the world's poor, CARE has learned that sustainable development cannot reach its fullest potential in an environment of endemic poverty and economic neglect of the society at large.

We strongly support the restoration of the democratic process in Haiti. Decades of ineffectual governance have stripped the Haitian people of their most basic human needs and rights. CARE commends the position taken by the United States, the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and the Friends of Haiti on the restoration of democracy in Haiti.

We also recognize the need for using sanctions against those who illegally seized power. However, sanctions must be accompanied by a comprehensive humanitarian assistance program. As an advocate for the poor, CARE urges the United States Government and the international community to provide adequate humanitarian assistance to protect the most vulnerable of Haiti's already impoverished majority.

Haiti's poverty is well-documented. It is one of the poorest countries in the world. The vast majority of Haitians, about three-quarters of the population, live in absolute poverty. About 47% of the adult population is illiterate, and only 43% has access to safe water. Infectious disease is widespread, and in the best of times, more than half the population suffers from malnutrition. The infant mortality rate stands at 95 per 1000 births. These statistics cannot adequately convey the persistent misery suffered by the majority of the Haitian people throughout their lives.

Northwest Haiti, where CARE presently targets most of its programs, has always been the poorest region in Haiti. The poor of the Northwest have been dealt a series of crushing blows:

years of drought, massive deforestation, low crop yields, and the additional hardships caused by sanctions. It is here, in the Northwest region, where the poorest of the poor must purchase almost all their food as a result of the extreme environmental degradation that has brought increased erosion, poor soil fertility, and meager agricultural production that prevents any modicum of household food security. The effect of rising food prices, about 50% higher than a year ago, in an area characterized by very few income-generating activities, leaves an already very vulnerable population in greater jeopardy. A recent USAID monitoring report on Haiti for December 1993 documents the continuing decline in the Northwest: total malnutrition (mild plus moderate plus severe) rose in this area mirroring the trend begun earlier in the year. 25% of infants born in the Northwest are underweight and food stocks here and in the North are desperately low, and even the production of traditional "famine foods", such as green mangoes, is down.

CARE, with funding from USAID, the American donor public, members of CARE-International and other international donors, is operating a supplemental feeding program for the nutritionally vulnerable in Northwest Haiti. This program requires approximately 4,000 metric tons of food per month for 620,000 people. This food represents a critical supplement to the rapidly deteriorating diets of those most vulnerable to malnutrition.

The difficulties of maintaining a humanitarian program under the complicated political and economic conditions created by the embargo are formidable. At present, over 600 shipping containers of much needed food, donated by the U.S. Government, are sitting in Port-au-Prince because of the need for fuel and spare parts for the trucks which deliver the food to distribution points in the Northwest. While these commodities sit at the port, food inventory levels in the Northwest remain critically low. CARE's plan calls for the distribution of daily supplemental food to 620,000. Interruption in the supply of fuel has caused irregular and inconsistent deliveries to the Northwest. Immediately preceding the start-up of the U.N.'s emergency fuel program which commenced on January 15th, the number of recipients had dropped dramatically to 117,000. As of today, that number has risen to over 200,000, still over two-thirds less than the targeted goal. If all now goes relatively smoothly, it will still require several weeks to reach full recipient levels again.

Hunger and poverty in Haiti are not consequences of the embargo. Even if the democratic process were restored today, there would remain a large, impoverished and illiterate population. Haiti has been, and continues to be, a food deficit country with limited resources for food production because of the lack of investment in agriculture and a chronically unstable political and economic environment. If it is clear to the international community that sanctions are a necessary means to restore the democratic process in Haiti, then it must be equally clear that there has to be an adequate humanitarian assistance program in place to protect the poor. Sanctions should impact those for whom they are intended. Haiti's poor should not become the victims of the good intentions of the international community.

CARE, with humanitarian assistance from the U.S. Government, American donors, members of CARE-International, and other international donors, is working to mitigate the impact of sanctions

on Haiti's poor. Both sanctions and humanitarian assistance can only work with the full cooperation of the international community. As the sanctions are tightened, we require the following to carry out an effective humanitarian assistance program in Haiti:

- o a six-month extension, through July, of the emergency feeding program targeting 320,000 of the most vulnerable people in the Northwest and North Antibonite.
- o expeditious issuance of export licenses and waivers from the Sanctions Committee and Office of Foreign Assets Control in the U.S. Treasury to meet procurement and safe delivery of additional trucks, spare parts, spare engines, tools, and tires.
- o the timely and regular delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, including emergency fuel.

SUMMARY

1. CARE strongly supports the restoration of the democratic process in Haiti, recognizing the need for using sanctions against those who illegally seized power.
2. CARE commends the position taken by the U.S., the O.A.S., the Friends of Haiti, and the U.N. on restoring democracy in Haiti.
3. In accordance with generally accepted international humanitarian principles it is essential that the international community provide adequate humanitarian assistance during an embargo to protect the most vulnerable people from its intended consequences.
4. In spite of the formidable obstacles created by the embargo, CARE, with assistance from the U.S. Government, the American donor public, members of CARE-International, and other international donors will continue to work to mitigate the adverse impact of sanctions on the most vulnerable population in the Northwest.

MICHAEL R. WIEST
Deputy Executive Director
Catholic Relief Services

Michael Richard Wiest was born May 20, 1945 in Albany, New York, the son of the late Lawrence Cornelius and Mary Elizabeth Wiest. He received his early education at St. Pius X and the Christian Brothers Academy, both in Albany. He received his B.A. in English Literature from Fordham University in 1967 and his M.A. in English Literature from Duquesne University in 1969.

Following graduation, Mr. Wiest worked in the financial management department at General Electric, until joining the U.S. Army in 1970 as a 1st Lieutenant and serving in Vietnam.

Following his military service, he worked briefly for the state Department of Labor in New York before joining Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in 1973. CRS, one of the largest international relief and development agencies in the world, currently operates in over 80 countries around the world and is supported by the Catholic community in the United States.

Mr. Wiest's career at CRS has taken him around the world. His first assignment was in the country of Senegal in West Africa where he worked as a program assistant; following that, he worked as the Country Representative in Sierra Leone and Upper Volta. Mr. Wiest then returned to CRS headquarters in the United States and served as the Assistant Regional Director for Africa.

Returning to the field, Mr. Wiest was assigned to the position of Regional Director for East Africa, based in Nairobi, Kenya. This was followed by two appointments as Country Representative to Indonesia and, most recently, to Morocco. In 1993, he was named Deputy Executive Director for CRS, responsible for all overseas operations.

Mr. Wiest and his wife, Toni, a teacher in American schools overseas for the past 15 years, have two children: Michael Christian, 24, a graduate of Dartmouth College and currently a Ph.D candidate in Physics at Michigan State; and Matthew Villa, 17, a high school student in Morocco, who plans to attend Northwestern University in the fall of 1994.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL R. WIEST
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FEBRUARY 9, 1994

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) operates a relief and development program in Haiti and has maintained a continuous presence in that country for more than 35 years. CRS Programs in Haiti geographically target Port au Prince and the Southern Peninsula. Our programmatic foci include: health, small enterprise development, agriculture and strengthening Haitian social welfare organizations. CRS participates as a cooperating sponsor with USAID in distributing food commodities under the PL 480 Title II Program. CRS currently distributes food to nearly 200,000 needy Haitians through school feeding, maternal and child health (MCH) and institutional programs that include, the aged, the sick, the physically and mentally handicapped and orphans. Since the September, 1991 coup d'etat, CRS has also implemented several emergency feeding programs targeting economically vulnerable families and orphans.

I returned on Monday from a one week visit to Haiti. While I was in Haiti, I traveled extensively throughout the Southern Peninsula. I drove from Port au Prince to Les Cayes to Jeremie and back to Port au Prince. I visited many of the institutions that CRS is supporting, including, schools, hospitals, MCH centers, and institutions for the sick and handicapped.

There is little doubt that the majority of Haitians are suffering. Although the economic embargo directed against their country exacerbates their suffering, the fundamental reasons for this misery certainly predate the embargo. A visitor to rural Haiti is immediately struck by the almost total lack of infrastructure, e.g., poor roads, dilapidated hospitals and schools, the absence of water and sanitary facilities, etc. The prices of basic food have doubled in the past year. Tens of thousands of rural Haitians are living at less than a subsistence level by selling charcoal, which ironically, is the only Haitian commodity that currently commands a lower price than it did a year ago. There is also anecdotal evidence that health and nutritional levels are

deteriorating in isolated areas of Port au Prince and in the Southern Peninsula.

This is not to say that the Southern Peninsula of Haiti is approaching a famine situation. Famine conditions do not appear likely over the mid-term future. Unlike other famines that the world has witnessed in recent years, coping mechanisms exist in southern Haiti. Micro-economic activities, for example, have not been disrupted by a rigidly enforced ideology. Petty trading is highly visible and abundant and although food is expensive, it is readily available in rural and urban areas. Large groups of people are not leaving their communities in search of food.

While CRS does not believe that Haiti will face a famine situation in the short to mid-term future, our assessment of likely socio-economic conditions during the same period remains pessimistic. It is a well known fact that the country's environment and natural resources are being degraded at an alarming and, perhaps, irreplaceable rate. Haiti's food security situation is precarious. Health and nutritional conditions are markedly deteriorating and will continue to deteriorate. There is a severe shortage of essential drugs in the country, while at the same time, the incidences of AIDS and tuberculosis are dramatically increasing. Last week, I visited several institutions that treat tuberculosis patients. Many of the institutions did not have anti-TB drugs on hand. Because of the lack of potable water and sanitation facilities in the countryside, the risk of a severe cholera epidemic presents a very real danger.

CRS feels that the international community needs to do much more to mitigate Haiti's misery. High ranking military and police officers targeted by the international embargo, by all accounts, are reaping enormous economic benefits from the distortions to the economy that the sanctions are causing. At the same time, the suffering of poor and middle class Haitians is significantly increasing.

Catholic Relief Services will continue its efforts in Haiti to ameliorate, to the extent that it can, the suffering of poor Haitians. CRS plans to address the very serious food security situation by requesting USAID to provide additional food commodities that CRS will distribute through institutions, i.e., schools, orphanages, homes for the aged, the sick and handicapped, tuberculosis sanatoria and hospitals. CRS also plans to purchase essential drugs and to distribute them through Catholic and Protestant mission hospitals in Port au Prince and the southern peninsula. We also plan to expand our potable water and latrine program in rural areas.

Mr. Chairman, CRS is committed to doing all it can to help the suffering people of Haiti -- today, tomorrow, and in the many months and years to come. Our words and deeds have shown that we are in for the long haul. As representatives of the Catholic community in the United States, we urge all parties associated with the ongoing political stalemate in Haiti to redouble their efforts to work toward a peaceful solution that gives the Haitian people a chance to decide their future. We stand ready to assist in this process in any way we can in order to prevent further disasters from befalling the people of Haiti.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN C. HAMMOCK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OXFAM AMERICA

before the
Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs
Committee on Foreign Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

February 9, 1994

Thank you for providing Oxfam America with the opportunity to share our views on the current crisis in Haiti. Oxfam America is an international development agency which works with grassroots groups in 30 countries throughout the world.

Oxfam America works in Haiti in partnership with groups representing peasants, who make up 80 percent of the population. The resilience of the Haitian peasants is remarkable; after withstanding generations of oppressive rule, their strong will secured the democratic election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1990. And despite a campaign of intimidation and violence by the military, they continue to call for their exiled President's return.

Now is a critical time for the Haitian people. There are signs that the three-month-old oil and arms embargo appears to be working. In Haiti and here in the US, supporters of democracy are anxiously awaiting the proposed resolution by the US, Canada, France and Venezuela to the UN Security Council for tougher sanctions against the military. Meanwhile, questions are being raised about the impact of the embargo on the Haitian people: USAID has reported no appreciable rise in malnutrition while aid groups report that fuel shortages are making it increasingly difficult to carry out feeding programs which provide a sizable portion of Haiti's poor their only meal of the day.

These questions must be sorted out, and the voices of the Haitian majority must be heard in this debate. My testimony reflects both my own observations from visits to Haiti -- most recently in October -- and the opinions of representatives of grassroots groups with whom Oxfam America works.

Oxfam America believes that the restoration of constitutional rule is a precondition for long-term development in Haiti. Unless the intimidation, murder, and complete disregard for the poor majority now exercised by the military regime ends, sustainable development and prosperity will be forever stifled. We simply cannot lose sight of long-term goals that can only be realized by the return of democracy.

Unless democratic rule is restored soon, the people of Haiti will continue to be the poorest in the hemisphere and the children of Haiti, saved in the short term, will remain victims - condemned to oppression, handouts and fear.

IMPACT OF THE EMBARGO ON THE POOR

Many observers, ironically including military officials, have concluded that the embargo is responsible for increasing suffering and therefore should be lifted for the sake of the Haitian poor. This analysis is misguided. In fact, an often misreported study conducted by a Harvard researcher to measure the embargo's impact concluded that:

"the human toll over this crisis period (possibly as high as 1,000 extra child deaths per month) has resulted from a myriad of factors including government mismanagement, economic and agriculture disruptions, population movements, economic sanctions and humanitarian neglect."

There is little doubt that the current embargo is hurting poor people and hampering the delivery of emergency assistance. Transportation costs have skyrocketed; poor people cannot get to work, send their kids to school or purchase supplies. People are selling what little capital they have, mostly livestock. And there are reports that deforestation, already a serious problem, has accelerated as people are forced to cut down trees for cooking fuel. Many cannot afford to travel to health clinics even where they exist.

Despite this suffering, peasants I spoke to this fall were unequivocal in their call for the restoration of democracy and the return of President Aristide. They are willing to endure strict international sanctions as a means to bring him back. As many poor Haitians told me: we have always lived under an embargo -- no food, no education, no health care, and no jobs. It's only the self-serving oppressive regime that has assets to lose.

IMPACT OF THE EMBARGO ON THE MILITARY

At the same time, Haitian military officials seem to have escaped much of this suffering. While most of the country receives little or no electricity, the military buildings are untouched by the shortage. A lack of enforcement of sanctions has actually bolstered the military, in particular, failure to close the Dominican border has enabled military officers to make enormous profits by cornering the black market on fuel.

There are signs, however, that the embargo may be working. Splits within the military leadership are being reported and pressure is rising among the lower level military officers, perhaps due to the recent move by the US to expand the number of Haitian military officers whose assets and visas have been frozen. The Haitian elite and the business sector also appear to be fed up. Many businesses are observing a strike to protest the embargo and

press the military to resolve the crisis. Even the wealthy neighborhoods are affected by electricity and water shortages. In addition, the Dominican Republic has begun to crack down on the widespread illegal passage of petrol across its border with Haiti because it has caused fuel shortages within Dominican villages.

THE 1991 COUP

Any discussion of the impact of the embargo on the humanitarian situation in Haiti cannot be separated from the 1991 violent military coup. Even before the coup, Haiti had a long history of political violence and had been considered the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Since the coup, Haitian human rights groups estimate that 3,000 to 4,000 pro-democracy supporters have been killed by the military, most grassroots groups have been dismantled and their leaders murdered or jailed. Anyone involved in organizing peasants or engaging in community development is targeted. For example, members of the Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP), an Oxfam America project partner which educates, trains and organizes peasants, have been arrested, beaten and driven underground. Several of MPP's members have been murdered; in fact, as recently as two weeks ago, one of its leaders was gunned down.

Also since the coup, tens of thousands have fled the country. An equally important refugee problem concerns the 300,000-400,000 people who have been internally displaced -- forced into hiding by political repression and thus been unable to send their children to school, see a doctor, go to work or farm their land.

Under the coup regime, government programs for the poor have also come to a halt. There is no interest in maintaining water management, sanitation or health services. For example, while private hospitals have managed to operate, public hospitals have no food, no bedding, no medicine and no electricity. Reports of profiteering, corruption, and theft of government property are widespread.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

The response by the United States and the international community to the violent coup has received mixed reviews from supporters of democracy inside and outside of Haiti. While the US and the United Nations denounced the coup and were successful in pressuring the military to sign the Governors Island Accord, efforts to restore President Aristide through diplomacy and sanctions have been plagued by setbacks.

From the beginning, implementation of sanctions has been half-hearted. The first embargo, sponsored by the Organization of American States in 1991, was publicly endorsed by the Bush Administration. Yet, privately, 150 export licenses were granted to US companies with assembly plants in Haiti. Enforcement of the most recent fuel embargo is also erratic.

Oxfam America's Haiti representative has witnessed firsthand the free flow of petrol across the border from the Dominican Republic. Yet the Clinton Administration denies this activity occurs.

Despite official pronouncements that the US commitment to restoring democracy was unshakable, the US government has sent numerous mixed signals – from a CIA smear campaign against President Aristide and the financing of right-wing political groups, to military training of Haitian nationals in the US, to DEA sharing of information with the Haitian military despite widespread reports of their involvement in drug-running. Most damaging perhaps is the continued policy of systematically returning fleecing Haitians back to their oppressors. These actions have prolonged the suffering of the Haitian poor, by playing right into the hands of the military, making them think they could simply wait out the crisis.

More recently, the United States has waffled on many fronts. First, it has dragged its feet in response to calls by the Aristide government, along with members of Congress and our allies, to tighten the sanctions. Then in December, the US issued a warning to the Haitian military to take steps to restore Aristide by January 15, 1994, or face tougher sanctions. Yet it wasn't until 12 days later that the US Treasury extended the freeze on visas and assets. And now three weeks have passed and the US has yet to offer a formal recommendation to the UN on international sanctions. These delays seriously undermine the effectiveness of the sanctions.

While Oxfam America project partners continue to call for full commercial trade embargo, they are extremely critical of the way the current sanctions have been implemented. They describe the current embargo as a slow strangulation of the poor.

THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

For many years Oxfam America has supported long-term development projects in Haiti including literacy training, legal assistance, health promotion, and the distribution of seeds, tools, and livestock. This work has been hampered by the coup: most of these projects' leaders have been forced into hiding and many peasants are afraid to take the risk of participating in our revolving credit programs.

Since Oxfam America does not provide emergency food assistance, I cannot offer statistics on increasing hunger and malnutrition except to say that, despite the commendable efforts of aid organizations, food and medicine is not reaching all of those who need it.

I would like to comment on some of the concerns expressed by our Haitian partners. First, Oxfam America is getting more and more requests for assistance from Haitian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide aid to persons not reached by current emergency programs, particularly displaced families. Second, our partners worry that the

increased reliance on food handouts is hurting local food producers and leading to increased dependence on outside aid. A few NGOs, including a Canadian program, are trying to address this problem, and have been successful in purchasing surplus food on local markets. Another solution recommended by NGOs in Haiti is to expand humanitarian aid to include inputs such as seeds, tool, and fertilizers so that, where feasible, Haitians can grow their own food.

In addition, it is clear that some aid intended for the poor is being misdirected. Food products stamped "not for sale" can be found in numerous markets. And while Oxfam America is fully supportive of the UN emergency fuel program, we have received reports that 10,000 gallons of fuel were missing from the first shipment. This program must be closely monitored by the UN to keep it from further strengthening the military.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would like to close by recommending several steps which must be taken immediately to show the military that the international community will not back down until democracy is restored to Haiti. I must emphasize that sanctions must be coupled with an adequate and responsible humanitarian response to ensure that the basic needs of poor people are met.

Diplomacy and sanctions:

- o President Clinton should reiterate his unequivocal support for the immediate return of the democratically-elected government of President Aristide.
- o The US should provide leadership within the UN for a full commercial trade embargo, with exemptions for humanitarian aid. The US government must reject calls for special exemptions from US-licensed assembly plants in Haiti.
- o The international community must ban all non-commercial flights to and from Haiti.
- o President Clinton should encourage our allies to join us in freezing the assets and visas of the Haitian military and their civilian supporters.
- o Stringent enforcement measures must be applied, including a strict naval, aerial, and border blockade by the UN.
- o The US and the UN must threaten the Dominican Republican with sanctions if it fails to enforce the embargo at the border.

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- o The US and the UN must threaten the Dominican Republic with sanctions if it fails to enforce the embargo at the border.

Humanitarian aid:

- o The US must support UN efforts to increase humanitarian aid and establish corridors of humanitarian relief. The UN must monitor the humanitarian exemptions and the delivery of assistance -- and fuel needed to transfer aid -- to ensure that aid is not misdirected.
- o UN and US aid should include seeds, tools, and fertilizer to poor Haitians so that they can grow their own food.
- o To the extent possible, US and UN aid programs should purchase surplus food on the local market.
- o US and UN aid programs should expand assistance to include persons not currently being served, including displaced people.
- o USAID and the UN should work with Haitian NGOs to provide agricultural inputs and other aid.

Human rights:

- o The US should press for the immediate return of the UN mission to Haiti as agreed to by both parties at Governors Island.
- o The US must reverse its repatriation policy towards Haitian refugees. Under no circumstances should any Haitian citizen refugee be returned to Haiti until the current crisis is resolved.

I would like to point out that these recommendations reflect the policy statement *Keeping Our Word: Toward Effective US Support for Democracy and Human Rights in Haiti*, signed by over 55 major US religious denominations, citizens groups, and human rights and humanitarian aid organizations with constituencies of some 50 million Americans. I request that a copy of the statement be submitted into the hearing record.

I urge you to take action immediately. Too much time has already been lost as a ruthless band of military thugs holds Haiti hostage.

With the iron will and steadfast determination that has made the United States so great, we must advance the principles of freedom and democracy in Haiti. Our own people expect no more from its leaders; our Haitian neighbors deserve no less.

Thank you.

Written Testimony Prepared for Congressman Robert Torricelli
Chairman, Western Hemisphere Subcommittee
House Foreign Affairs Committee
by the
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

From January 10-14, the president of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Dorothy Smith Patterson, led a fact-finding delegation to Haiti to examine the human rights situation and U.S. efforts to support multilateral problem-solving and a return to constitutional rule. The UUSC group met with Haitian human rights and grassroots organizations, as well as with the UN/OAS International Civilian Mission. They talked with Haitian cabinet ministers, the acting Prime Minister and diplomats at the United States, French and Venezuelan Embassies.

The delegation included a member of the staff of Congressman Joe Kennedy, representatives of Unitarian Universalist churches in Miami and Washington, and UUSC staff including the Washington Representative. UUSC is a 55-year old human rights and international development agency with headquarters in Boston. The following observations are based on conversations with Haitians and others interviewed during the trip to Port-au-Prince.

1. Widespread Rights Violations and Unchecked Military Power. Great concern was expressed about widespread repressive actions by an emboldened Haitian military which feels unconstrained by the rule of law or international agreements to which it has put its name. No real avenues for legal recourse exist, nor expectations of accountability, even in highly publicized cases such as the killings of Justice Minister Guy Malary and Antoine Izmery, a financial backer of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Paramilitary groups enjoy the freedom of movement closed off to those believed to be supporters of Aristide or proponents of constitutional rule. Frustration was expressed about how widespread repression forced many into hiding, inactivity or silence. This precluded broad-based participation in discussions about how the country might return to the democratization process. Nothing better captured the human rights challenge than rural Haitians who expressed their yearning to be treated with dignity. They spoke of being viewed as subhuman by local chieftains acting like warlords. Others echoed this when they described Haiti as a feudal society in which there was blanket disregard for individual rights and the rule of law.

2. Economic Self-Sufficiency At Risk for Thousands. At least 300,000 Haitians are internally displaced, having fled their homes in response to threats and attacks on their life, physical integrity or economic livelihood. This situation contributes to a break-down in the Haitian family unit, especially when a parent must leave the interior to seek greater personal safety in the city. The prolongation of emergency responses to the post-coup crisis has intensified the frustration felt by those still unable to return to their homes and traditional means of livelihood. Some

warned that this situation is fostering dependency in traditionally self-reliant people. The generalized climate of repression was seen as a decisive factor in internal migration, with some Haitians later seeing no option but to flee their country.

3. Flight and Scarcity, Aggravated by Monopolistic Price-Fixing. The uprooting of thousands of Haitians has reduced local food production, given farmers' displacement from lands they worked. Shortages caused by decreased production of subsistence crops are aggravated by sharp price increases for basic necessities, such as cooking oil and water. Increased imports of basic foodstuffs risks undermining further the local economy. Sharp price increases, unresponsive to supply and demand, hurt both middle class and poor Haitians, and reflect a closed monopolistic economy dominated by a few. Tax measures enacted early in the Aristide presidency aimed to address the closed Haitian economy and the limitations it offers for creating jobs through increased production.

4. The Military, Black-Marketeering and the Embargo. Limited in scope and slow in application by the international community, the current embargo has failed to achieve its objective: to influence the behavior of Haitian military leaders who promised at Governors Island to step down, only to break their word. While gas stations are closed and power is rationed to several hours a day, men at roadsides openly sell gasoline widely believed to come from military storage depots. Interviews led one observer to conclude that some 50 percent of the oil arriving in January destined for humanitarian purposes would be siphoned off by the military, while diplomats estimated some 20 percent. A corrupt military and elite served by private loading docks have yet to feel the pinch of the economic sanctions. Rather, the present embargo's impact is borne primarily by the middle and poorest sectors. These range from salaried employees whose life style requires clothing and transporting children to private schools, to workers whose survival depends on public transportation and, when lucky, a daily wage.

5. Clearer Signals to Haitian Military Leaders Needed. The economic embargo was adopted by the international community, including the United States, as an appropriate diplomatic tool to bring pressure to bear on a Haitian military leadership which resisted action on its July 3rd promises at Governors Island. But the present embargo proved too weak, in scope and application, to send strong enough signals to Haitian military leaders. To attain its objective and minimize harm to the Haitian on the street, such a measure must be comprehensive, swift and well-monitored. In addition to a vital humanitarian aid component, a comprehensive commercial embargo must be accompanied by political initiatives that signal clearly and repeatedly the international community's intent to support and pressure for a return to constitutional government. One such political signal is the important recent step taken by the U.S. to tighten control of visas and assets of more Haitian military officers. (That this measure comes many months late underscores the importance of timing to achieving a desired impact.) Another such signal would be attention to Haiti's porous

border with the Dominican Republic. Although the U.S. joined the other U.N. Friends of Haiti in threatening action on the border and embargo issues, no date has been set for U.N. debate. In comparison with Canada and France, the U.S. is now perceived as foot-dragging on the shared commitment to seek a more comprehensive embargo through the U.N. Security Council.

6. Disregard for Haiti's Future and the Fundamentals of Democracy. Sharp language was used to describe how appeals to the Haitian elite to consider the common good, the well-being of the country's most vulnerable or the Haiti inherited by a next generation, have fallen on deaf ears. The will of the majority does not resonate as a democratic principle to be respected; the rule of law is not deemed a goal worthy of personal sacrifice. The elite, it was predicted, would never again make the mistake of allowing elections based on one person, one vote. Because the 67 percent which elected Aristide did not include some of Haiti's prominent voices, it was considered suspect by them and not a determinant factor in shaping the country's political future. Similar stories were told that spoke to the military leadership's disinterest in the fundamentals of democracy and representative government. Efforts to divide the military -- through dialogue, "professionalization" or other means -- come up against one problem. A common goal unifies military leaders who otherwise operate as individual chieftains: preventing the return of Aristide. There is little evidence in the last two years to suggest that the Haitian military leaders' lockhold on power can be significantly altered without intense international diplomatic and economic pressure.

7. Incipient Political Parties and Expression of the Public Will. Many commented on the need for Haitian politicians to develop improved mechanisms for consensus decision-making and majority rule politics, especially within the Parliament. Parliamentarians' dialogue with the business community has drawn special attention. Support for democrats and their contribution to problem-solving requires attention to the broadest array of "democratic players," including Haitians who exercised their electoral rights and the many organizations of civil society. This broadened focus is especially important, given the incipient and fractured nature of Haitian political parties and limitations on their ability to speak credibly for all Haitians on future steps in a return to democracy.

8. Selective Restrictions on the Rights to Free Speech, Assembly. The inability to move freely and speak openly -- together with widespread fear -- presents serious obstacles and dangers for those involved in popular education, union organizing, social justice promotion and religious activities. This has greatly hampered civil society's ability to call publicly for the protection of its basic rights, organize effectively for a return to constitutional rule or participate in efforts to focus attention on the Governors Island objectives. Restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly fall disproportionately on supporters of President Aristide. But they also affect those who speak out in favor of constitutional rule or believe that a return to true democratic practices cannot

occur without the return of Aristide. Limitations on free speech and assembly have far-reaching effects...from Mayor Evans Paul's inability to assure garbage collection in Port-au-Prince, to rural communities too fearful to continue their work with malnourished Haitians having no access to international humanitarian relief.

9. Roadblocks to Crucial Human Rights Reporting. Haitian human rights groups are often targeted for their role in education and data collection activities, as has been well documented by international rights groups. The director of one Haitian human rights organization was forced to flee the country in the fall of 1993 after he spoke out against paramilitary bands. Other groups cannot operate openly, much less travel freely in the countryside to conduct their normal work. Gatherings of as few as three people may be considered subversive and participants subject to suspicion. This same repressive climate -- with no checks and balances on the military or the power of rural warlords -- makes training programs and rural development activities virtually impossible.

10. Returned International Mission Retraces Its Steps. The decision to withdraw the UN/OAS International Civilian Mission (ICM) came in the wake of violence that erupted following the abrupt turning back of the USS Harlan County. The departure of the international monitors who worked throughout the Haitian countryside left a vacuum in human rights reporting, especially communications with the interior. It also generated fear among those who had talked with the international monitors, and direct recrimination against some. The Mission's closing represented a serious setback in efforts to collect human rights information and provide a concrete demonstration of the international community's commitment to human rights protection. The ICM has planned, and recently implemented, a limited return of staff to Port-au-Prince, under difficult security and political conditions. While welcome, their return is to a more hostile political environment than they previously faced. The international community can best show its support for the work of the mission by redoubling its efforts to back multilateral problem-solving in Haiti. The Mission's work will remain limited in scope and impact if little progress is made in restoring constitutional rule, with the promise that offers for reducing military impunity and strengthening rule of law. The Technical Mission's ability to return is another key yardstick.

11. Questions About International Community Resolve. Haitians most affected by repression or restrictions on their rights of free speech and assembly hold strong views on the international community's response to the post-coup period, especially the weeks of repression following the signing of the Governors Island agreement and the unilateral U.S. decision to return the US Harlan County. First inaction and then lack of political resolve have contributed to a widespread sense of abandonment, and anger among many. The international community's failure to follow through decisively after the January 15 deadline set by the U.N. Friends of Haiti further encourages this cynicism about support for democracy and efficacy of multilateral efforts.

12. Democratization Off Track and Constitutional Rule Imperiled. Continued impasse in the reestablishment of constitutional rule, including the return of the president chosen by 67 percent of the Haitian electorate, could seriously undermine the advances represented by the 1990 elections and lead to a 10-year setback in Haiti's incipient democratization. Political solutions that fail to address the reality of military power and military impunity, or involve strategies that disregard constitutional rule, will not win broad popular support or be effective in building democratic practices in Haiti. The current political situation is marked by the emergence of paramilitary groups which move about freely, combining repressive paramilitary activities with electoral ambitions and populist language described by some as fascist. These developments represent both a distortion of the essence of democracy, and a potential flash point for future violent confrontation. Faced with Haitian military recalcitrance, some early proponents of the Governors Island agreement now take a reductionist approach. They argue that the Haitian military responds only to the threat of force or force itself, but that no U.S. consensus exists on the use of force. A more constructive focus for future U.S. action is the wide array of intermediate political/diplomatic steps, public and private, which could send stronger signals to Haitian military leaders, their families and civilian backers. It is essential that U.S. bilateral steps be paralleled by swift U.N. Security Council deliberation.

13. Dialogue in the Context of Military Usurpation of Power. Some Haitians seek new mechanisms of dialogue, so as to facilitate consensus decision-making, form working majorities and reestablish civilian governance. Polarization suggests such advances could be slow. To be true to the goal of a return to constitutional rule, new political initiatives and consensus-building need to include the active involvement of the President and his government. Any coalition initiatives need to be predicated on, and address specifically, the reality that the military leadership remains the major stumbling block in efforts to return to constitutional order. If unaccompanied by international pressure and new multilateral action, dialogue among Haitian democrats -- however broad-based -- cannot be expected to alter significantly the present power equation between the military and elected civilian leaders.

14. A Political Vacuum, with Elected Officials on the Sidelines. The inability of President Aristide's cabinet ministers to carry out their work creates a political vacuum and non-functioning state apparatus. One view is that this could lead to a situation of "implosion" in a society in which there is no real governance. The military is seen as the only institution able to function as such. This situation of de facto rule has blocked or short-circuited efforts to strengthen civilian rule through institution-building.

15. Government Officials Unable to Provide Basic Health Services. One serious repercussion of military intransigence and the resulting civilian power vacuum is that basic government services such as sanitation and health have not been allowed to operate.

The responsible and relevant Ministries find themselves impotent before pressing humanitarian needs, given the political impasse in the return to constitutional rule. Blocked from performing their duties, officials serving the constitutional government are unable to tabulate which health and hunger problems are new and more acute, and which show less change and reflect the decades-long problem of Haitian governmental failure to provide the most basic social services to the general population.

16. The Humanitarian Crisis in the Context of Historical Neglect. Haiti's long history of poor health and nutrition is an important reference point for anyone seeking to draw conclusions about the present humanitarian situation and its relationship to the embargo. Recently, international aid agencies seem to report varied hunger and nutrition-risk findings for different geographic locations. Some of the many factors relevant to assessing humanitarian need and the effects of the present embargo are: the restrictions military rule presents for cabinet and local government officials to carry out their preventive health work; the ability to collect data which permit careful assessments of hunger in different areas and comparisons over time; the adequacy of humanitarian relief operations designed to parallel UN/OAS determinations on economic embargoes; practices that block or limit Haitians' ability to produce their traditional subsistence crops; unchecked actions that intensify hardship for the average Haitian, including price-fixing and black-marketeering by the military and elite; and the Haitian military leadership's perceptions about the political will and resolve behind international economic measures.

17. The USS Harlan County Torpedoes Political Momentum. There is broad consensus that the abrupt mid-October departure of the USS Harlan County bearing the UN technical mission resulted in a grave setback to the Governors Island goals. Governors Island was alternately described as "a car in the ditch" and requiring active resuscitation after being "sunk" by the ship's departure. The recall of the ship put in jeopardy the diplomatic process whose goal was the diminution of Haitian military power, and parallel steps to ensure the restoration of constitutional rule. Some military officials interviewed shortly after the ship's departure at first expressed amazement at how the U.S. had responded to a noisy yet small group of dockside agitators; soon however they were celebrating the political bonanza that had fallen in their lap.

18. A Special U.S. Responsibility for Forward Movement. Because it brought to a halt the uneven yet forward momentum of the Governors Island process, the Harlan County incident has led many to believe that the United States now bears a special, even disproportionate, responsibility to lend its fullest support to on-going multilateral efforts. These efforts use the Governors Island agreement as reference point, because that agreement is predicated on what first motivated international community involvement in conflict-resolution in Haiti: active support for a return to constitutional order, including respect for the decision of the Haitian electorate in what were recognized as free elections.



ISBN 0-16-044568-X



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